

Barth's corpus from the pre-Romans period though the posthumous sections of the *Church Dogmatics*. It is well written, relatively free of 'Barthian' jargon and thus accessible to the more general audience, and contains a nearly comprehensive introduction to the moral theology of the twentieth century's most significant theologian. McKenny's account is highly appreciative of Barth's moral vision but falls short of a full endorsement. Throughout, he sympathetically critiques Barth's moral reflection and suggests how it might be amended, corrected and repaired. Such rehabilitative work, argues McKenny, will not only secure Barth a permanent place in the canon of Christian ethics but also moves towards a truly viable alternative to the traditional Augustinian understanding of the relationship between divine and human action. McKenny hints, in the conclusion, that such work is necessary if the Reformation teaching on grace and justification, so ably defended by Barth, is to continue to have a future voice in the universal church. This volume will soon be recognised as the standard benchmark and essential reading among publications concerning Barth's ethics. It will therefore be of little surprise that the book is strongly recommended to any and all who have interest in contemporary moral theology and/or the legacy of Karl Barth.

Matthew J. Aragon Bruce

Lindenwood University, St Charles, MO 60331, USA

mbruce@lindenwood.edu

doi:10.1017/S0036930611000743

C. Kavin Rowe, *Early Narrative Christology: The Lord in the Gospel of Luke*, BZNBW 139 (Berlin and New York: de Gruyter, 2006), pp. vii +277. \$40.00.

Originally prepared as the author's published dissertation (under Richard Hays, Duke University Divinity School), this volume serves to clear fresh ground on several fronts. While scholarly opinion has generally characterised Luke as holding to a 'low christology', envisaging Jesus as a prophetic agent on Yahweh's behalf, Rowe is prepared to argue that the evangelist finds himself quite at home with the kind of christological statements characteristic of Paul or John. Such appears to be the case, the author argues, on a narratological analysis of the word 'lord' (*kyrios*) in the Lucan story. While 'word study' approaches to Christology have – rightly by all counts – fallen into disfavour in the past several decades, Rowe conceives his own work as being of a different stripe as he attends 'with sufficient sensitivity to the narrative sophistication with which Luke develops the meaning of *kyrios*' (pp. 8–9). Since, per Ricoeur, identity can only finally be derived from narrative and since, too, Luke assigns an especial significance to *kyrios* (all the

more striking given the evangelist's unique penchant for attaching the term to the earthly Jesus), such a project naturally commends itself.

Focusing on Luke 1–3, chapter 1 advances exegetical arguments which will prove determinative. When Jesus first appears in the narrative (Luke 1:43), he is 'ho *kyrios* in the womb' (p. 39): in 'this crucial moment of Jesus' introduction, Elizabeth's confession effects a duality in the referent of the word *kyrios* between the as yet unborn and human *kyrios* of Mary's womb and the *kyrios* of heaven' (p. 40). This same duality is extended in other closely related texts within the birth narrative (1:16–17, 76; 2:11). The author also finds interesting evidence in 3:4–6 that Luke reworked his scriptural citation so to create ambiguity: the 'paths of our God' (LXX) are now 'his paths', referring not to either Yahweh or Jesus, but equivocally to both (pp. 70–6).

Chapter 2 focuses on pericopae occurring in Luke 4:14–9:50. At points, Rowe's exegesis simply builds on standard readings (e.g. in the Calling of Peter many commentators already find significance in the fact that the apostle first calls Jesus 'master' (5:5) and then 'lord' (5:8)); at other points, the author's readings are both clever and persuasive (e.g. the ambiguity of the Greek of 5:17 may indeed reflect Luke's consciously preserving Jesus' dual identity). The same ambiguity is also meant to obtain for other Lucan phrasing found in Jesus' mouth, including not least 'the lord of the sabbath' (6:5) and 'lord, lord' (6:46). Even in the case of the Healing of the Centurion's Servant, which affords 'a locus classicus for this mundane reading of *kyrie*' (i.e. 'sir!'), the addressative term provides the evangelist with raw christological material – not just here, but throughout the Gospel.

Chapters 3 and 4 carry the thesis forward along similar lines. While the argument does seem repetitive, nonetheless patterns established earlier on begin to come into sharper focus. For example, Martha's innocently addressing Jesus as *kyrie* only reconfirms 'that Luke composes his narrative, time and time again, so that the vocative and non-vocative are joined together by virtue of their immediate proximity' (p. 150). There is even meaning in the term's absence: the conspicuous paucity of occurrences of *kyrios* in the passion account is no lapse on the evangelist's part, but a symbolic indication that the Lord has been rejected.

The author concludes in chapter 5 by affirming that *kyrios* is for Luke a *leitwort*. The term represents neither a blending of human and divine concepts, nor a collapsing of Jesus with the Father, but a binding: 'in a crucial sense heaven and earth are joined through the word' (p. 202). Likewise, Luke's Christology is neither adoptionist nor Gnostic; for the third evangelist, Jesus is the 'embodied revelation' (p. 218) of the Lord God. Luke's storytelling is not an overwriting of history, but history theologically interpreted.

Rowe's published dissertation is in many respects a model of narrative criticism. Its argumentation is focused, clear and – in my mind – finally convincing. My only major criticism bears on the structure of the book which, apart from some structural consideration of Luke itself, appears somewhat arbitrary. Moreover, one wonders whether the author's largely synchronic approach to the narrative too easily precludes an exploration of how Luke employed plot as a means of developing the christological conception. All the same, *Early Narrative Christology* will undoubtedly be a lingering voice within some of the most pressing discussions within New Testament theology today.

Nicholas Perrin

Wheaton College Graduate School, 501 College Avenue, Wheaton, IL 60187, USA

nicholas.perrin@wheaton.edu

doi:10.1017/S0036930611000366

Adam Neder, *Participation in Christ: An Entry into Karl Barth's Church Dogmatics* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2009), pp. vii+135. \$25.00.

Adam Neder begins his book with the observation that Barth's *Church Dogmatics* does not take the form of a straightforward sequential argument, but rather proceeds by way of a 'slowly moving gradual accumulation of elaborations and recapitulations on dogmatic themes; it is more like an avalanche than an arrow'. Not only is this a wonderful description of Barth's 'method', but it helps account for why so many, myself included, find it difficult to write about Barth without feeling that our very attempts to do so cannot do justice to his theology.

I am happy to report, therefore, that Neder has written about Barth's understanding of our participation in Christ in a manner which not only does justice to that particular theme but to Barth's theology as a whole. Even better, he has done the impossible, i.e. he has written a short book about Barth's understanding of our union with Christ which can serve well as an introduction to Barth's *Dogmatics*. For it is Neder's contention that union with Christ is a theme seen in every aspect of Barth's theology. His incisive and clear overview of each volume of the *Dogmatics* is one which could only be provided by someone well schooled in Barth's theology.

Neder is well aware that his focus on Barth's understanding of our participation in Christ is not what many would assume to be a primary theme in Barth's theology. He ends the book with a quite interesting comparison of Barth's understanding of our union with Christ and the Orthodox account of *theosis*. Neder is very careful to distinguish Barth's understanding of our participation in Christ from that of the Orthodox, yet he argues that Barth's views can be described in terms of deification just to the extent that, for Barth,